

**PROCEEDINGS OF  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WEST BLOOMFIELD  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
Township Board Room  
4550 Walnut Lake Road  
West Bloomfield, Michigan 48323  
Thursday, May 23, 2019**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair Wenczel

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chair Sally Wenczel  
Treasurer Merv Aronoff  
Secretary Michele Hembree  
Commissioner Robert Brooks  
Commissioner Vincent Kirkwood

Staff Present: Jennifer Tucker, Executive Director  
Joe Ketchum, Parks Superintendent  
Kelly Hyer, Recreation Superintendent  
Township Liaison Warshay

Absent: Commissioners Barash, Sukenic

Public: None

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Commissioner Brooks, to approve the agenda.**

**Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: Barash, Sukenic**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

**Recognition of Trail Stewardship Efforts by Scotch Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> Graders**

Recreation Superintendent Hyer recognized 4<sup>th</sup> grade students at Scotch Elementary. These annual stewardship walks have been going on since 2010 and are a service project and hands-on learning opportunity to apply what the 4<sup>th</sup> graders are learning in the classroom. Five classes participated in the walk this year and the students collected approximately 100 pounds of litter and Garlic Mustard on the trail.

## CONSENT AGENDA

Items A through C are Consent Agenda matters considered to be routine by the Commission and enacted by one motion unless a member of the Commission wishes to discuss one of the topics.

- A. Approval of Minutes from the April 25, 2019 Regular Commission Meeting.
- B. Approval of the April Financial Reports.
- C. Approval of prepaid expenditures in the amount of \$807,264.02. Expenditures in the amount of \$109,802.44. Credit card refunds totaling \$1,397.50 for the month of April 2019.

**Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Commissioner Kirkwood, to approve Items A through C on the Consent Agenda.**

**Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: Barash, Sukenic**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

## Presentation of the 2018 Financial Audit – Plante Moran

Stacey Reeves, Plante & Moran made a presentation to the Commission of the 2019 Financial Audit. She was accompanied by Kyle Vieth. Ms. Reeves stated that this report is in draft form. The Commission shares a pension plan with the Township which is still in the process of finalizing the audit related to the pension plan. As soon as that is finalized the Township issues their audited financial statement, Plante Moran will update the Commission's report and finalize the audit. None of the information within this audit report is expected to change though. Ms. Reeves stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission received an unmodified auditor's opinion on its financial statement, meaning it is without any qualifiers or modifications. It is the best that you can get from your auditors and means that it is free from material misstatements. The financial statements represent the hard work the Parks and Recreation staff does throughout the year. The letter from Plante & Moran is its opinion on the Parks and Recreation financial statements while the graphs give a representation of the financial statement.

Mr. Vieth provided an overview of the graph package. The graphs are a pictorial statement of the Parks and Recreation financial statements. Mr. Block said that General Fund revenues are segregated out by category and go back four years for trend analysis. The revenue totals increased from the prior year but overall revenues were consistent and the main revenue driver was property taxes. There are millages coming up for renewal and if they are not renewed the Commission has to find a replacement revenue source. Total expenditures decreased from the prior year by \$250,000 and the majority of this was due to the closing of the FAC. Overall expenditures by activity has remained consistent over past years. Personnel costs make up the majority of the Commission's expenditures.

Fund Balance is an accumulation of funds over time. The pension plan is about 82% funded. There was a reduction in the funding status which is due to the market performance in the last quarter of 2018 and this is a common trend in many other communities. Ms. Reeves said that having a fund balance of 82% is something the Commission should be very proud of because that is not typical of other communities. If the Commission continues to fund and doesn't have any new entrants into the plan, the plan will get fully funded. Commissioner Brooks asked when that would happen. Ms. Reeves said that if the Commission wants to be fully funded in a certain amount of time, the actuaries can tell it what that contribution would have to be. She added that the Commission is following best practice as relates to funding.

Ms. Reeves referred to the End of Audit Report. She said the audit went extremely well. It was a huge accomplishment for the Parks and Recreation team to deal with the auditors because they were also going

through implementation of new software as well as handling their day-to-day tasks. It was no small feat to be able to complete the audit and present it to the Commission at this meeting as usual. They appreciate the responsiveness and professionalism of the entire Parks and Recreation team. Commissioner Hembree thanked Ms. Reeves and also the Parks and Recreation staff for the great job. Director Tucker said that Plante & Moran was fantastic and WBPRC staff members Ruth Lyons and Stephanie Smith are top notch and she cannot say enough good things about them. Chair Wenczel thanked everyone for their hard work in getting through the process.

**Motion by Commissioner Brooks, second by Treasurer Aronoff, to approve the 2018 Draft Financial Audit Report as presented.**

**Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: Barash, Sukenic**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

## **STAFF REPORT**

Executive Director Tucker reported on May 4<sup>th</sup> the Great West Bloomfield Michigan Week Committee met in preparation for the Michigan Week annual breakfast. WB Parks is a sponsor of this event and part of the committee. The emcee of the event was Executive Director Tucker and there were over 300 attendees.

The Senior Services Advisory Team met on April 8<sup>th</sup>. The group finished their work on a survey they are creating to collect opinions from residents. This group is made up of seniors of different interests and there are two County Commissioners on the team. The first issue of West Bloomfield Senior Happenings will be going out by the first of next month. This is the first West Bloomfield senior newsletter and will go out to about 5500 residents. Splash Landing is moving along and staff is still working on some permitting obstacles. The equipment is in Montreal ready for delivery. With all this rain they probably wouldn't have gotten much further ahead anyway.

National Trails Day Walk and ITC kiosk dedication is June 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:30 a.m. There are about 130 registrants registered for the walk that morning.

Parks Superintendent Ketchum reported that staff is fabricating sign holders to put 4' x 6' signs up to advertise upcoming events. These are done in-house. Little League Baseball and Softball, Men's Softball and Youth Soccer Leagues are in full swing, keeping staff busy grooming, marking and painting fields. It has been a rough season so far and due to the rain staff has had to reschedule and move numerous baseball games from Drake Sports Park to Keith Sports Park. Staff has performed infield maintenance at Drake Sports Park. This maintenance includes re-arcing the infields, adding clay to the pitching areas and batters boxes and installing new infield material to the skinned infields. The outfields were also rolled to remove uneven ground created from the winter freeze and thaw cycles.

Staff has added stone and regarded the dog park parking lot as well as the parking lot at Bloomer Park and the boat launch. Staff has also finished all spring clean-ups in the parks. Landscape beds are being prepared and should be completed by the end of the month.

Parks facilities are fully functional and ready for summer. The parks department has started working summer hours working 7 days a week from 7 am until 10:30 p.m. Superintendent Ketchum said it has been tough to get employees this year and they are at the minimum that they normally have. Commissioner Brooks asked if the Parks Department is looking for part-time employees. Superintendent Ketchum said they absolutely are. Commissioner Brooks gave kudos to the Parks Department staff dealing with all of the rain and said the parks look pristine. Commissioner Kirkwood asked who makes the determination on the

baseball fields that they cannot be used. Superintendent Ketchum said their Athletic Fields Supervisor makes the determination after consulting with him. Commissioner Kirkwood asked if anybody checks the grass before the Kids Komotion concerts. Superintendent Ketchum said Chris Frey was out there today and there was a lot of water at the bottom of the concert hill and because of the wind staff was not able to put up as many tents. Director Tucker said that staff goes to weather training and the weather is a topic that they do not take lightly. Secretary Hembree said she admires staff, especially their ability to move things around as needed for Touch-a-Truck. Secretary Hembree asked Superintendent Ketchum to elaborate on the decrease in the children in the area as a trend, versus the apparent high level of attendance at our events. Superintendent Ketchum stated that all the youth sports leagues are seeing a decrease in participation of which part may be linked to increased participation in travel teams. The senior / empty nester households are growing yet the area is beginning to attract young couples with children. That is why he believes part of the Commission's goal with the splash pad is to attract young families. Commissioner Kirkwood further commented that the decrease could be due to gaming and technology keeping our children indoors.

Recreation Superintendent Hyer gave the Recreation report. She stated that 2019 has been a transition year for Recreation staff. Bringing in new staff has been a whirlwind. Naturalist Lauren Azoury took time to put together a program for Bring Your Child to Work Day. The Youth Dance Program ended with a recital on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. This dance program is smaller than average dance programs in the area however they have really dedicated parents and the kids thoroughly enjoyed their performance. The Spring Fling Egg Hunt was in April. There were high winds which did not allow staff to fully set up but that did not stop the participants from having an amazing time. The annual Earth Day Celebration was held on April 18<sup>th</sup>. It was a very challenging day due to the rain. 245 guests came to the event.

Touch-a-Truck was very successful with 1800 attendees. The seniors enjoyed a day trip to Northville on April 23 which included the Lace Museum, Mill Race Village and lunch at Tiramisu. The outing was a joint trip with WB Parks and the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society. In 2019, the Recreation Department is trying to do a collaborative outing with a different historical society every month. The Frog Hike on April 26<sup>th</sup> had WB Parks partnering with Friends of the Rouge and Detroit Audubon and it was the best attended Frog Hike program. The Rain Barrel workshop on April 28 had 13 attendees.

Fall registration will open in June. They are seeing a decline across the United States in league sports so they are trying to turn that around locally. Travel sports is a big thing and if people can't participate due to time or money WB Parks and Recreation want to provide something here in their backyard. Kids Komotion had 600 people come out tonight. The start time was changed to 5:30 because they want the kids to come out of the concert a little earlier before bedtime. The new time for the concert is 5:30 – 7:30.

Director Tucker said West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation staff is one of the best groups of people you will ever meet. She is very proud of them and everybody is working hard for the Commission. Chair Wenczel thanked staff for the great programming and said there is so much environmental education that goes along with the workshops and classes.

## **ITEMS FROM THE OFFICERS**

### **A. Items from the Chairperson**

Chair Wenczel thanked Director Tucker for representing WB Parks and Recreation and emceeding the Michigan Week breakfast.

### **B. Items from the Secretary**

None.

**C. Items from the Treasurer**

Treasurer Aronoff said there is an interesting website for those interested in hiking and the trail network. It is called the Rails to Trails Conservancy. Every trail in the United States is listed and you can upload photographs for individual trails.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. Executive: Chair Wenczel**

No meeting.

**B. Finance: Report from Treasurer Aronoff**

Treasurer Aronoff stated the committee met before tonight's meeting and discussed and reviewed the May invoices, vouchers and the monthly budget status. They also discussed the agenda items for tonight's meeting. The next meeting is scheduled in June prior to the regular Commission meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**(A) Consideration to Approve the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority Insurance Renewal for 2019-2020.**

Executive Director Tucker said that the renewal of the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Association Insurance comes up in May or June each year. The policy is effective from July to June on an annual basis. After an evaluation of assets, the MMRMA has indicated that the 2019-2020 financial year premiums is \$55,642. This is a minor increase over 2018-2019.

**Motion by Commissioner Brooks, seconded by Treasurer Aronoff, to approve the renewal of MMRMA Liability Insurance Policy for the 2019-2020 financial year in the amount of \$55,642.00.**

**Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: Barash, Sukenic**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

**(B) Consideration to Approve the 2019 Tax Rate Request.**

Executive Director Tucker said the Oakland County Board of Commissioners requires the form be approved by the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Commission and signed by the Chairman and Secretary or Treasurer. The form will then be submitted to establish the millage rates.

**Motion by Commissioner Brooks, seconded by Treasurer Aronoff, to approve the 2019 Tax Rate Request as presented.**

**Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel**  
**Nays: None**  
**Absent: Barash, Sukenic**  
**Motion Carried 5-0**

**(C) Consideration to Approve Orchard Mall Project Amendment.**

Executive Director Tucker said that at the January 24<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting, Huntington construction Company was approved to complete the improvements needed to the Orchard Mall space for \$103,490.00.

Through the process of having building drawings completed as required by the Township's Ordinance, and unforeseen deficiencies in the construction plans, the updated estimate for the project rose as high as \$181,000.00. In collaboration with the Orchard Mall Management, the Huntington Construction team and WB Parks Staff, we were able to reduce the amended project cost by approximately \$40,000.00. That being said, we are still over budget by approximately \$21,000.00. WB Parks Staff has identified \$15,000.00 in savings that will be available in the 2019 budget and are looking for cost savings of \$6,000.00.

Commission Kirkwood asked if there are any renderings of what this project will look like. Director Tucker said nothing is on the website because the details are not solidified by this commission. Secretary Hembree reminded the township citizens of all the work put into this project prior to finding this location. Director Tucker said staff has been working on this project for over a year and they looked at many other locations. The Orchard Mall management team has been unbelievable in how they are working with this community. They have made it economical enough for Parks and Recreation to make these improvements and the lease payment the commission will be paying every month is far below what they would have paid anywhere else. It is also safe, well lit with good parking.

**Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, seconded by Commissioner Kirkwood to Approve the Amendment for the Orchard Mall Project, as presented.**

**Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel**  
**Nays: None**  
**Absent: Barash, Sukenic**  
**Motion Carried 5-0**

**(D) Consideration to Approve Dates for Commission Training.**

Executive Director Tucker said that in 2017, the Commission participated in a two evening training. With the addition of two new commissioners, it is time to review the Commission's responsibilities, meeting procedures and code of conduct. Joscelyn Davis of Jade Strategies along with Greg Need, WBPRC Attorney will be leading the Commission training sessions. The possible dates will be in June and will be emailed to the Commission as soon as they are available. She said the last dates that had been suggested were June 24<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup>. Once these dates are solidified they will be sent to Commissioner Sukenic to see if he is available. Chair Wenczel noted that Commissioner Barash is tentative for those dates. Director Tucker said that is correct and he may have a conflict. She suggested that the Commission postpone this training until after the summer since everyone is getting so busy.

Secretary Hembree said she is interested in having another company conduct the training and she has some recommendations. Chair Wenczel said she believes that they already have a contract. Director

Tucker said the current consultant has been retained. Secretary Hembree said she would like to see someone else come in with a new and different perspective. Commissioner Brooks suggested moving forward with the June dates and if they don't work move it to another date. Treasurer Aronoff agreed with keeping the June dates that have been suggested.

**Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, seconded by Commissioner Brooks, to Approve the Commission Training Sessions scheduled for June 24<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup> with the attendance of the entire Commission.**

**Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Kirkwood, Wenczel**  
**Nays: Hembree**  
**Absent: Barash, Sukenic**  
**Motion Carried 4-0**

### **ITEMS FROM THE TOWNSHIP LIAISON**

Township Liaison Warshay said he enjoyed seeing some of the commissioners at the Michigan Week Breakfast and it was a great event. He is looking forward to the Food Truck rally on June 7<sup>th</sup>. There was only one Township Board meeting and that was on May 13<sup>th</sup>. At that meeting the Board made a Proclamation recognizing Mental Health Awareness for the month of May. They also recognized National Police Week. There was a nice event honoring everyone who has fallen in the line of duty in the past year as well as the West Bloomfield police officer who perished in the line of duty. The Board changed the Public Comment section of the meeting and now it is only once in the beginning of the meeting and the comment time was extended to 3 minutes. The Board will make allowances for people that can't arrive that early to still allow them to address the Township.

Commissioner Brooks asked if there is a way to advertise for the parks in the township and wondered who owns the frontage areas such as the civic spaces. Liaison Warshay said he believes those are all private property. Commissioner Brooks asked if there has been any more discussion about the high rise apartments going in behind Panera Bread. Liaison Warshay said he thinks that is all speculative.

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Secretary Hembree thanked the residents who stopped and checked on her as she was doing clean-up for the Adopt-a-Road program. Many residents honked their horn or gave her a thumbs up and made sure she was okay. She also thanked the West Bloomfield Police who drove by multiple times to make sure she was okay. Commissioner Brooks said that safety should be the overriding focus of residents this summer when enjoying the trails and parks. Treasurer Aronoff reminded residents to stay on the trail and watch out for poison ivy as it is abundant.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Commission, Treasurer Aronoff made a motion to adjourn, and unanimously supported. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,  
**Secretary Michele Hembree**

Pamela St. Peter  
Recording Secretary

(As a permanent record, an audio tape of this meeting in its entirety is on file and will remain at the Parks and Recreation offices where it may be heard.)